

## PSILOTA ANTHRACINA MEIGEN AND OTHER SCARCE DIPTERA IN WARWICKSHIRE (VC38)

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diptera recording in Warwickshire continues to produce unexpected finds, even amongst comparatively well studied groups such as Syrphidae. Several species new to the County have recently been found in this, and other, families.

*Psilota anthracina* Meig. is a small, Merodontine syrphid, whose distribution is largely confined to the ancient woodlands of southern England (principally the New Forest and Windsor Forest), although there is also a recent record for South Essex. Its status on a national scale is considered vulnerable. The capture of a specimen attracted to the blossom of rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia* L.) in old deciduous woodland at Ryton Wood, SP3872, (female, 22.v.1989, A. Wright) represents a considerable northerly extension to its previously recorded distribution in England.

Ryton Wood, SP3872, has also provided recent records of two other scarce syrphids new to the County; *Cheilisia nebulosa* Verrall (2 males, 10.iv.1987, A. Wright) was taken hovering low to the ground in a somewhat damp ride. Although the sun was shining, the temperature was still decidedly cool. *Ferdinandea ruficornis* (F.) has appeared on at least two occasions in Ryton Wood (2 males, 14.vii.1985, A. Wright/C.J. Palmer; female, 29.iv.1987, A. Wright). Specimens were taken around trees, but no recent evidence of *Cossus cossus* L. in Ryton Wood exists. *Criorhina ranunculi* (Panz.), previously only known from Austy Wood SP1762 in Warwickshire (28.iii.1948, K.G.V. Smith) has been seen at Ryton Wood (females, 27.iv.1987 and 25.iv.1988, both A. Wright) and at Brandon Wood, SP3876 (female, 28.iv.1989, A. Wright).

Several other notable Syrphids have recently been found in Brandon Wood, SP3976, a site where 118 species of hoverfly have been recorded over the past 5 years. (Wright, 1988). *Brachyopa pilosa* Collin, thought at the time of publication of *British hoverflies* by Stubbs & Falk (1983) to be largely restricted to Windsor Forest, the New Forest and Surrey, was taken on 14.v.1988 (a male, D.J. Mann), hovering in a somewhat overgrown ride. *B. pilosa* has recently been shown to be more widely distributed than originally thought, but the above record provides an interesting addition to the Warwickshire fauna.

The first post-1980 Warwickshire records for *Melangyna arctica* (Zett.) (2 females, 11.v.1989, A. Wright; male, 23.v.1989, A. Wright) and *Pipiza fenestrata* Meig. (male, 14.v.1988, A. Wright) were also from Brandon Wood. A suspected *Cheilisia chrysocoma* (Meig.) visiting flowers of *Sorbus aucuparia* L. eluded capture at this site, although this species has been added to the County fauna on the basis of a specimen from the margin of Wellesbourne Wood, SP2653 (male, 26.iv.1989, R. Langdon). Mr Langdon reported seeing three or four individuals, hovering at about head-height, stopping periodically to rest on the leaves of adjacent trees.

*Neoascia interrupta* (Meig.), only added to the British list in 1981, has a distribution centred on south-east England and the fens, thus a specimen at Stonebridge Meadows LNR, Coventry SP3475 (female, 13.v.1987, S.A. Lane) represented a considerable extension to its range. Several other wetland hoverflies of note have been recorded recently in the county, particularly at Sutton Park SP0998. *Orthonevra geniculata* Meig. was recently recorded for the first time this century at this site, specimens of both sexes being swept from sedges around Longmoor Pool (26.iv.1988, J. Piekarczyk). The species was also encountered in better numbers

during sweeping at Little Bracebridge Pool (11.v.1989, R.J. Barnett and A.C. Barlow).

*Platycheirus perpallidus* Verrall was also taken by sweeping marginal vegetation at Little Bracebridge Pool, fair numbers of this insect being found in May and June 1988 (J. Piekarczyk, A. Wright, D.J. Mann).

*Chrysogaster macquarti* Loew. appears to be present as a stable population at this site. Having been found around Longmoor Pool during 1986 by S.G. Ball, this species was also in evidence at Little Bracebridge Pool in both 1987 and 1988 (A. Wright). A much less expected find was the occurrence of *C. macquarti* at Wyken Slough, Coventry SP3683. The site consists of a large, somewhat invertebrate-poor pool, with a small (110×80m) marshy area to the north. It was from this latter area that a male was captured on 7.vii.1988 (A. Wright). The site is surrounded by close-mown grass and pasture land, and the M6 motorway is less than 300 yards away. The scarce stratiomyid *Vanoyia tenuicornis* (Macq.) was found to be present at the same site, being swept from reeds (male and 3 females, 7.vii.1988, A. Wright).

In terms of Stratiomyids, Herald Way Marsh SSSI, Coventry proved to be an extremely productive site, recently producing three species new to the county, as follows: *Vanoyia tenuicornis* (Macq.) (female, 22.vi.1988, A. Wright); *Oxycera nigricornis* Ol. (female, 22.vi.1988, A. Wright); *Praomyia leachii* (Curt.) (male, 22.vi.1988, D.J. Mann).

The rare *Oxycera morrissii* (Curt.) is also present at this site, being found in both 1987 and 1988 (S.A. Lane, R.J. Barnett). The tipulid *Nephrotoma crocata* (L.) was recorded at this site in both 1987 and 1988 (S.A. Lane), and the muscid *Dialytina atriceps* (Loew) was found here by S.G. Ball in 1988. *D. atriceps* is a rare fenland species unexpected so far from its traditional haunts. Sadly, despite its SSSI status, it seems virtually certain that this excellent invertebrate site will undergo industrial development in the near future.

A further hoverfly new to Warwickshire, *Cheilosia griseiventris* Loew was taken at Bishop's Hill, Bishops Itchington, SP3958 (male, 3.viii.1989, A. Wright). On the same day, two specimens of the conopid *Thecophora fulvipes* R.-D. were swept from an area of calcareous grassland at this site (D.J. Mann).

The rare Dolichopodid *Systemus pallipes* (von Roser) was encountered at Sutton Park SP0998 in some woodland near Little Bracebridge Pool (18.vi.1988, S.G. Ball). The fly had been attracted to a sap run on oak. The rare empid *Oedalea apicalis* Loew was swept at Brandon Wood, SP3876, (male, 14.vi.1989) A.C. Barlow. *Chrysops viduatus* F. was added to the county lists on the basis of a specimen from Stockton Quarry (male, 14.vi.1987, D.J. Mann).

The scathophagid *Scathophaga decipiens* Hal. has a centre of distribution based around south-east England, although there are scattered records as far west as Pembrokeshire and as far north as Perthshire. Specimens swept at Coombe Park SP4080 (male, 2 females, 16.xi.1988, A.C. Barlow) were an addition to the county fauna. Only about a dozen post-1960 records of this fly are currently on file. A male *Sphaerophoria* keying to the 'form A' of Stubbs & Falk was taken by the author of CAD Kinton, SP34, on 1st August 1989. The taxonomic status of this form remains as yet unresolved.

Voucher specimens for all the above, with the exception of material collected by S.G. Ball, are retained in the collections of the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry. I wish to thank Stuart Ball, Tony Barlow, Ray Langdon and Darren Mann for permission to include their records. Stuart Ball also provided additional distribution data for some species, for which I am most grateful.

## REFERENCES

- Stubbs, A.E. & Falk, S.J. 1983. *British hoverflies — an illustrated identification guide*. British Entomological and Natural History Society, London.
- Wright, A. 1988. The hoverflies of Brandon Wood, Warwickshire. *Proc. Cov. Nat. Hist. Sci. Soc.* 6: 65–68.

## BOOK REVIEW

**Local lists of Lepidoptera or a bibliographical catalogue of local lists and regional accounts of the butterflies and moths of the British Isles** by J.M. Chalmers-Hunt. Hedera Press, 1989, £21.00.

For those involved in drawing together information on the Lepidoptera of a given area, for whatever reason, a bibliography of existing local lists is long overdue. Even for researchers in the well-worked families which form the butterflies it can be a nightmare uncovering all available existing information. Earlier works by other authors have come part way to filling the gap. For Ireland, *A bibliography of Irish entomology* (Ryan *et al.*, 1984) included many references to the Lepidoptera (I reviewed this work in *The London Naturalist* 65: 100 (1986)). A year earlier *A bibliography of the entomology of the smaller British offshore islands* by Smith & Smith (1983) had plugged a gap in an equally poorly recorded area. However, the present work appears to be the first, at least during the present century, to cover this single order of insects for the entire British Isles.

The author, Michael Chalmers-Hunt is, to say the least, a well known lepidopterist and all round naturalist. His knowledge of the British butterflies and moths is second to none and in particular his *magnum opus* on the butterflies and larger moths of his home county of Kent, published in parts as a supplement to the *Entomologists' Record and Journal of Variation*, bears testament to this. He is also a past President of the British Entomological and Natural History Society. As well as being a serious collector of Lepidoptera he is also an avid collector of books and papers on the subject and in the reviewer's opinion there is no man, or woman, alive today better suited to produce the work presently reviewed. He places his own library last in his list of resources, though one inevitably suspects that he has drawn rather more heavily on this than modesty permits him to reveal.

Some 30 years of work have been involved in producing this bibliography of 3137 titles (the numbers rise to 3161 but 24 numbers were accidentally omitted from the original typescript), which cites all county and regional lists and local accounts of British Lepidoptera known, though lists containing relatively few species have generally been omitted. Local lists often contain information of considerable interest to a wide readership, though because of the way in which many local lists were, and still are, compiled these data have never been published in the major journals. Such local lists, particularly manuscript works, are frequently difficult to obtain and are certainly unlikely to be chanced upon by the general researcher. It is therefore particularly valuable to have a bibliography which not only lists the works but also includes a note on where they may be examined.

The bulk of the work is an alphabetically arranged list of references, much as would be found at the end of any scientific paper. Each entry is numbered and